

What Other States Have Established

A national model of wage enhancement (WAGE\$®) currently exists and is being implemented in four states. North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, and Kansas chose to adopt WAGE\$® to address their early care and education personnel compensation needs. Although the national model is available, several other states that have implemented wage enhancement programs have chosen to create their own systems to address workforce compensation. Arizona has chosen to follow the approach of these other states.

Regardless of the specific program model, each state's system includes the following infrastructure components:

- Criteria for participation
- Criteria for minimum level of education to receive an award
- Varying tiers of awards increasing as educational attainment increases (see page 7 for example)

After reviewing several state models, the FTF logistic team recommends developing a system that would be Arizona specific rather than adopting the national model, WAGE\$. While the national model is working in some states, it is simple enough to adapt to our state's unique needs. The logistic team determined an Arizona specific model would allow for greater flexibility to develop a system that was

fully responsive at a local level without the constraints that come with purchasing a national license. In addition, the team considered the need to possibly evolve the requirements over time as the system develops. To be tied to a national model and specified criteria, might present barriers to the level of flexibility the logistic team suggests would be necessary. In addition, creating an Arizona specific wage enhancement model can assure there is full alignment with other components of the state's professional development system. This would create, for example, the opportunity to align the career ladder, the standards for staff qualification which have been incorporated into the quality improvement and rating system, and the wage enhancement model.